

Prayer in the Name of Christ.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

K I N G,

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H A M P T O N - C O U R T,

J U N E 1. 1701.

By W. S H E R L O C K, D. D. Dean of St. Paul's,
Master of the Temple, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His M A J E S T Y.

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L O N D O N:

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SEYMOUR

KING

HAMPTON COURT

JUNE



Warrant for the arrest of

James Maitland

of the County of Middlesex

Esquire

and for the arrest of

James Maitland

XVI. JOHN part of 23, and 24.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.



HIS our Saviour repeats in the 26th and 27th Verses: *In that day ye shall ask in my name, and I say not to you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. And there was great reason for repeating this, and speaking very plain, because it was a new Form of Worship, which they were hitherto unacquainted with; as he tells them, Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; for the proper time for that was not yet come: But after his Resurrection from the dead, and Ascension into Heaven, all their Prayers must be offered to God in the*

Name of Christ; which gave a new Form to Religion, and distinguish'd the Christian Worship from all other Forms of Worship. This is a matter of such near Concernment, and so little considered in its true Nature, and just Consequences, that I cannot do better than briefly to explain it to you, as a very proper Subject for our Meditation, now we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension, and contemplate our Lord in his Advancement to the Right Hand of the Throne of God: And to this purpose I shall,

1. Enquire, What it is to ask in the Name of Christ, or to offer up all our Prayers to God in his Name.

2. Shew you, That this is the only way now to have our Prayers heard and answered by God; and that God will certainly grant us all the good things which we pray for in the Name of Christ.

1. As for the first, to ask in Christ's Name is to beg God to hear and answer all our Petitions for Christ's sake, not for *any worthiness of our own*, but *through our Lord Jesus Christ; for the Merits and Mediation of our only Mediator and Advocate Jesus Christ; for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ*

Christ our Lord; or such other equivalent Expressions, wherewith we always conclude our Prayers. But as often as we repeat these and such like Forms of Words, I doubt there are too many who never rightly considered the true meaning and importance of them; which makes it necessary to explain this in some few Particulars:

As 1. To pray in the Name of Christ, is to beg of God all the good things we want, in a firm belief of the Merits of Christ's Death, and the Power of his Intercession; that he hath purchas'd all good things for us, and is advanced to the Right Hand of God, to bestow on us whatever we ask in his Name; as he tells his Disciples, 14. *John 13, 14. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* We must pray in Faith, if we would be heard; but the Christian Object of Faith in Prayer is, not merely the Natural Goodness of God, but the Merits and Mediation of Christ, that Covenant of Grace and Mercy which Christ hath sealed with his own Blood, and which he administers by his Power. St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, That all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, Yea, and in him Amen; that is, they are all made to us in him, and accomplish'd by him, 2 *Cor. 1. 20.* So that he is
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now the only Medium of our Faith, and Hope and Trust in God, as he is our only Mediator and therefore *we must come unto God by him*, in full Trust and Reliance on his Merits and Mediation.

We must ask all Blessings of God in such a Manner, and for such Reasons as he has promised to bestow such Blessings on us ; and therefore if all the Promises of God are made to us in Christ, and bestowed on us for his sake, we must ask them all in his Name : As to shew you this particularly :

God forgives the Sins of true Penitents, only for the sake of Christ, who hath made the Atonement, and sealed the Covenant of Grace and Pardon with his own Blood ; and therefore this is the Commission he gave his Apostles after his Resurrection from the dead, *That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations*, 24. Luke 47. And this Remission of Sins is only to be had through Faith in his Name, or through Faith in his Blood. 3. Rom. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood*. And therefore we must ask the Forgiveness of our Sins only in the Name of Christ, and through Faith in his Blood ; that

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I cannot see what Title those men have to the Forgiveness of Sin, who though they believe in Christ as a Divine Teacher, and the most excellent Prophet, and Pray to God in his Name as a powerful Favourite; yet believe not one Word of the Expiation of his Death, and therefore cannot be justified through Faith in his Blood, nor Pray to God in the Name of their great High-Priest and Sacrifice, which is the true Notion of Praying to God in Christ's Name; in Virtue of his Sacrifice and Sacerdotal Intercession; without which, we Pray for the Forgiveness of our Sins without a Promise.

Thus, next to the Forgiveness of our Sins, we daily want the Supplies of God's Grace and Holy Spirit, to Renew and Sanctify our Natures, to Mortify our Lusts, to Confirm our Faith in all difficult Trials, and to make us fruitful in all good Works; now this is to be had only in Christ, through Faith in him, and therefore we must ask it all in Christ's Name.

It is he alone, that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, who hath Promised, That *whosoever believeth in him, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters*, 7. John 38. It is he who when he left this World, sent his Spirit to dwell in his Church, to animate his mystical Body, and every living Member of it. All supernatural

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Grace

Grace is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Promises of supernatural Grace are contained only in that Covenant which is Sealed with his Blood; our Regeneration and new Birth is our being baptized into his death: He is that bread of life, which came down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world; to Feed on him, is the constant Support of our spiritual Life: For his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He is the spiritual Vine, we the Branches, and from him we derive all the Influences of spiritual Life, to bring forth Fruits unto eternal Life; and if all Divine Grace be derived from him, we must ask it in his Name.

The End and Completion of our Hope is Eternal Life, and that is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, 6. Rom. 23. God hath given unto us eternal life, but this life is in his Son, 1 John 5. 11. As our Saviour himself tells us, That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, 3. John 16. And, I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die, 11. John 25, 26. With many other Expressions to the same purpose. So that Pardon of Sin, and Supernatural Grace, and Eter-

nal Life, are all the Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and through him only; and therefore we must ask them of God only in his Name, for we can have no other Title to them, but his Merits and Mediation, through Faith in his Blood.

As for all Temporal Blessings, these we must ask also in the Name of Christ. For though God doth Good to the Evil and to the Good, and causeth his Sun to shine, and the Rain to Fall upon the Just and upon the Unjust; and as St. Paul tells the men of *Lystra*, even in those times, When God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways; yet he left not himself without a witness, giving us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, 14. Acts 16, 17. yet I say, it is a very different thing to live upon the undistinguish'd Goodness of God, and to have a Covenant-Right to God's Care and Protection, and constant provision for us, even in this World. Now we have no Promise of these Temporal good Things, but only in and through Christ; but he hath Promised, That if we seek first the Kingdom of God; that is, the Kingdom of Christ, which is the Kingdom of God on Earth, if we become good Christians, believe in Christ, and obey his Laws, then all these things, Food and Rai-

ment, and all the other necessities of Life, *shall be added unto us*, 6. Math. 33. And St. Paul tells us, *That Godliness, that is, the sincere Profession and Practice of Christianity, hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come* 1 Tim. 4. 8. And that God's Love in giving his Son for us, is reason enough to depend on him for all other things: *For he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* 8. Rom. 32. Christ hath now all Power committed to him, both in Heaven and in Earth, and he governs this lower World in subserviency to the great ends of his Spiritual Kingdom and allots our particular Portions and Condition in this World, as we are best able to bear it, as will best secure our Eternal Happiness, and advance our Progress in all Christian Graces and Vertues. This gives us all possible Security, that we shall want nothing that is good for us, and (which is considerable as that) that all things shall work together for our good. This is a much happier State than to be Rich and Great at all Adventures; and if we would have God Chuse for us (which every Wise and Good man would) above all things in the World make his Choice, we must Pray for all Temporal, as well as Spiritu-

Shall we ask for any spiritual good Things, in the Name and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2dly. To ask in the Name of Christ, is to recommend our Selves and our Petitions to God, only upon this account, that we are the Disciples of Christ. *We are accepted in the beloved*: it is, as I have already shewn, through His Merits and Mediation alone, that God forgives our Sins, bestows on us the Influences of his Grace in this World, and Eternal Life in the next; and it is only our relation to Christ that gives us a Title to the purchase of his Death, and the Blessings of his Intercession; and therefore this is our only Plea at the Throne of Grace, That we belong to Christ, that we are his Disciples, and the Members of his Body, which Entitles us to the Purchase of his Blood.

Faith, and Repentance, and New Obedience, are the necessary conditions of our Discipleship. Christ will own none for his, but those who Believe in him, and Obey him: but nothing of this is to be Pleaded at the Throne of Grace, any otherwise than as the Evidences of our Discipleship; the Name of Christ, our Relation to him, is our only Plea, not the Merit of Faith, or Repentance, or Obedience, which have no other Merit, but what the Merits of Christ give them.

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As the Covenant of Grace was Purchase and Sealed with the Blood of Christ, so the Covenant was made with Christ for all whom he would own to be his Members and Sincere Disciples; and therefore he is made the Judge both of the Quick and of the Dead; and his Judgment consists in Judging who are his, he separates the Sheep from the Goats, and those whom he owns, God owns, and Rewards with Eternal Life; and whom he Rejects, God Rejects, and condemns to be punished with the Devil and his Angels. Thus our Saviour expresses the final Damnation of Bad Men, by his denying them, and being ashamed of them. *Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* 10. Mat. 33. And *whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels; that is when he comes to Judgment,* 9. Luke 16. This shuts all Infidels and Impenitent Sinners out of Heaven, that Christ disowns them, *I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity,* 7. Matth. 23. and then the Justice of God will seize them, and render to them according to their Evil Works. But the sincere Disciples of Christ, whom he will own the

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Last Day before his Father, and the Holy Angels, though they cannot Challenge Heaven as the Merit of their Works, yet they shall be Saved by his Name, and inherit that Glory and Immortality, which he hath purchased for his Church. And thus we must Pray to God, as we must finally be Saved, only in the Name of Christ; and unless we approve our selves to be the Sincere Disciples of Christ, and the Living Members of his Body, God will no more hear us when we Pray in the Name of Christ, than we shall be Finally Saved by his Name. This our Saviour signifies, in that assurance he gives his Disciples, that God will hear them, if they Pray in his Name; *For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God.* That is, because ye belong to me: Which, by the way, if well considered, would easily reconcile that warm dispute about Faith and Works in our Justification; God accepts and rewards us, that is Justifies us for the sake of Christ, as his Disciples, not for the Merit either of Faith or Works; but Christ owns none for his Disciples, but such Believers as obey his Laws, and do the Will of his Father which is in Heaven; and therefore none but such shall be Justified by God.

3dly.

3dly. To ask in the Name of Christ, is to offer up all our Prayers and Petitions to God by Christ our Great High-Priest. Such Vile Miserable Sinners as we are, must not approach the Throne of Grace without a Powerful and Meritorious High-Priest to offer up our Prayers to God. This is the encouragement the Apostle gives us in our Prayers, *Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession to the end; for we have not an high-priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin; let us therefore come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* 4. Heb. 16, 17, 18. Under the Law, the Prayers of the Saints were Typified by Incense, which was offered by the Priest together with the Sacrifice; and thus our Great High-Priest alone who has made the Atonement for us by his Blood, must offer up our Prayers to God in Virtue of his own Blood. If we must ask the Forgiveness of our Sins only in the Name of Christ, and in Virtue of his Sacrifice, not but our High-Priest can offer our Prayers to God, for none else can unite our Prayers and his Sacrifice together.

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Those who Pray to God in the name of any Creature, though the greatest Saints and Angels, who yet never Died for them, nor made any Atonement for their Sins, Pray to God without a Priest and a Sacrifice, and such Prayers will not be received. The Intercession God will accept, is not the Intercession of a mere Favourite, but of a Priest; and the Intercession of a Priest consists in offering up our Prayers in virtue of his own Sacrifice: And therefore to pray in the Name of Christ, is to offer up all our Prayers to God by him, from whom only our Prayers will be accepted. And this teaches us how necessary it is for us to pray to God: For Christ does not intercede for us, unless we pray for our selves; he cannot offer our Prayers to God, if we make no Prayers for him to offer. To expect that Christ should intercede for us, when we never pray for our selves, is not to trust in him as our Mediator; for the Office of a Mediator is not to pray for us, whether we pray or no, but to offer up our Prayers; and when we humbly and heartily pray, then our Lord offers up our Prayers to his Father, and gives Virtue and Acceptation to them. This may suffice for the Explication of the first thing proposed, What it is to ask in the Name of Christ.

2dly. This asking in the Name of Christ is now the only way to have our Prayer Heard and Answered by God, and that God will certainly grant us all Good things which we Pray for in the Name of Christ. Now here are two distinct parts. First, That God will hear us upon no other Terms than asking in Christ's Name. And Secondly, That he will grant what we ask in Christ's Name.

It is very necessary, especially in such an Age as this, carefully to consider the First, where so many Men Deceive themselves, that if they Repent of their Sins, and Amend their Lives they need no Name to pray in ; a Good God will forgive their Sins, and grant all they Pray for, without a Priest, and Sacrifice, and Mediator ; There is nothing of all this in Natural Religion, and they doubt not but that is a way to Salvation ; and therefore they despise Revelation, and all the Talk of the Sacrifice and Priesthood, and Mediation of Christ, as a meer Fable, and the Invention of Priests.

Natural Religion is a very Charming Word and carries great Authority in its Name ; these men little consider what the true state of Nature is ; for pure Natural Religion is fit only to the original state of Nature, and fit no other state. This is a self-evident Proposition.

That Natural Religion is that Religion which belongs to the true state of Nature ; and therefore can't be the only Religion of Man, when he is fallen from the true Original State of Nature.

Now whether we believe the History of *Moses* or not, if we believe that God made man, we must believe that he made Man upright, that Man came pure, innocent, and holy out of the Hand of God : Innocence and Holiness was the Original State of Nature , and consequently Natural Religion is the Religion of Innocence, such a Worship as innocent Man owes his Maker, and as God will accept of from an innocent and holy Man ; which principally consists in owning him to be the Maker of the World, and our great Creator ; in giving him the glory of all his Works ; in a thankful Acknowledgment of his Goodness ; in professing our Dependance on him, and Submission to him in all things , and praying for the Continuance of his Favour to us.

This, I say, is Natural Religion in a state of Innocence ; and there can be no other Notion of pure Natural Religion, because there is no other true state of Nature : For by Sin man falls from the Original State of Nature, as well as from the Favour of God ; and then mere

Natural Religion can be no more the only Religion of a Sinner, than Sin is the Original State of Nature.

I grant, that Reason it self, without Revelation (which in that sense may be called Natural Reason) exacts some new Duties from Sinners; as, To be sorry for their Sins, to beg God's Pardon for them, and to reform them. But these are not the Duties of Natural Religion, that is, do not immediately result from Nature, but are consequential Obligations which Sin, not Nature, lays upon us; and therefore the acceptance of all this can't be owing to the Religion of Nature, of which it is no part, nor to the mere Natural Goodness of our Maker, which is dispensed only according to the Rules and Measures of Nature, or the Natural Covenant, which is confined to Innocent Creatures, and does not extend to Sinners.

Some men think, that Natural Reason makes it as essential to the Divine Goodness to forgive a Penitent, as it makes it a necessary Duty for Sinners to repent; and therefore make Repentance a Duty, and the Forgiveness of Sins an Article of Natural Religion: Whereas it is certain, Natural Religion exacts an unfinning Obedience, and therefore makes no Allowance

for Repentance ; and that Natural Relation which God has to his Creatures , as their Maker and Sovereign Lord, extends his Goodness no further than to Innocent Creatures, who preserve the Uprightness and Integrity of their Nature : And how good soever God is, and how much soever it be the property of goodness to forgive, we must expect no more from God, than according to the terms of that Covenant under which we are ; and therefore by the Natural Covenant, or Natural Religion, Sinners have no Right to the Forgiveness of Sins, for that is a Covenant of Obedience, not of Pardon.

Mankind had reason to hope, that a good God would Forgive the Sins of true Penitents ; but then it must be under some other Character and Relation, than meerly as our Creator and Sovereign Lord ; for though this secures Innocent and Obedient Creatures of all that natural Happiness they were made for ; yet Grace and Mercy for Sinners, is not a Natural right, which we can Challenge from the goodness of our Maker ; and therefore is no Promise of Natural Religion, which reaches no further than the rights of Nature.

There is no need to dispute, Whether a good God can Forgive Sin ; for infinite Goodness,

ness, which is the Goodness of God, must comprehend all kinds, degrees, and instances of Goodness; and Forgiving-Goodness is Goodness, and therefore essential to the Divine Goodness: But the single Question is, Under what notion this Forgiving-Goodness belongs to God, and by what Rules it is administered? For the different kinds of Goodness, though they all belong to the Goodness of God, yet do not all belong to the same Administration.

Now all the several Acts of the Divine Goodness may be reduced to Two general Heads, *viz.* Creation, and Redemption.

Creating-Goodness does not only signify giving Being to Creatures, but a Happy Being, according to the different Capacities of their Natures; and this, we may modestly say, give them a Natural Right to that Happiness their Natures were made for, while they continue such Creatures as God made them: For God giving them such Natures, is a kind of Natural Contract and Covenant with Creatures for a Natural Happiness, while they observe the Laws of their Nature, and live as such Creatures ought to live; and if God made them improveable Creatures, as he made Man, every improvement they make, entitles them

to such new Degrees of Happiness in the Divine Favour, as answers to such Improvements : Thus far Natural Religion, and the Natural Covenant reaches, to Entitle us to the Favour of God, and all the Happiness of our Natures, in the observance of the Laws and Religion of Nature : But now it is manifest, that this Natural Creating-Goodness of God extends only to innocent Creatures ; for the natural obligation on God to do good to them, is, that he made them ; and the natural Right they have to the Goodness of God, is that they are such Creatures as God made them ; but Sin dissolves this Obligation, and forfeits this Right ; for a degenerate Apostate Nature is not the object of natural Goodness, but of natural Justice, which is as Essential to God as Goodness is ; and therefore whatever Goodness God extends to Sinners, is not owing to the natural Covenant, nor consequently to natural Religion, but to a Superabundant Goodness in God, which hath no Cause but it self ; and therefore is absolutely at Liberty to dispense Grace and Mercy to Sinners upon what terms he pleases ; and this is the Reason and Foundation of the Covenant of Grace, and of Instituted Religion, to prescribe the Means and Conditions of our Recovery, which belongs not
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to Creating, but Redeeming Goodness: for that is the true Name of God's Goodness to Sinners, which delivers them from the Just Punishment of their Sins, Restores them to the Favour of God, and a Forfeited Happiness. This, Sinners have no Natural Right to, and therefore must owe it to a Voluntary Covenant of Grace and Mercy: there is such a Goodness in God as can and will Forgive Sins, and Save Sinners; and natural Reason may satisfy us, that there is such a Forgiving-Goodness in God; but then this is not the meer Goodness of a Maker, but of a Redeemer; is no part of the Natural Covenant, but of a Covenant of Grace; that could we never so Demonstratively prove, that God will Forgive true Penitents, this does not prove, that Sinners shall be Saved by meer Natural Religion which admits of no Repentance, promises no Pardon, has no Priest, nor Sacrifice; but if it proves any thing, it proves that God will enter into a new Covenant of Grace and Mercy with Sinners; for Sinners cannot be saved by Nature, but by Grace; as to explain this by a Parallel Instance,

A Father is under a Natural Obligation to be kind to a Virtuous and Dutiful Son; this is founded in Nature, and is a kind of natural

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Covenant ; which gives an Obedient Son as Natural a Right to the Love and Care of his Father , as the Father has to the Duty of the Son : but Disobedience and Rebellion Forfeits the Rights of this natural Relation ; and though natural Affection may still move a kind and compassionate Father to be Merciful to a repenting Rebel and Prodigal , this is all Grace and Favour, not a Natural Right ; and therefore the kindest Father may, and a Wise Father will make new terms with his Rebel and Prodigal ; not see him, nor accept his Submission, without powerful Intercessions, and great Securities of his good Behaviour ; and will first put him into a State of Trial and Discipline , before he receives him to Favour. But then if this Rebel and Prodigal have not only provoked his Father, and Forfeited his Natural Right to his Paternal Care and Kindness, but has Sold himself into Slavery, has Forfeited his Life, spent his Inheritance ; mere Pardon and Forgiveness will not save such a Prodigal, but there must be a Ransom Paid for his Liberty, his Life must be Redeemed, and a new Inheritance must be purchased for him, or his Father's Pardon will do him no good : A very kind Father may do all this, but it is not a Debt of Nature , but pure
D. Grace;

Grace; and as the Prodigal has no Natural Claim to this, so he can have no Natural Assurance that his Father will do it, till he see him do it, or has his Promise to do it: His meer returning to his Natural Duty will not purchase his Liberty, his Life, and his Inheritance; his Father must make a new Purchase of this, and enter into new Contracts and Covenants, quite different from the natural Covenant between Father and Son.

This may give us some notion of the difference between a natural Covenant, and the Covenant of Redemption; between the Religion of Innocent and Obedient man, and the Religion of a Sinner: The Religion of Nature in the first Case will secure to us the Natural Goodness of our Maker, and all the Rights and Privileges, and Happiness of innocent Nature; but a Sinner, who has provoked his Maker, Forfeited Immortality and an Earthly Paradise, corrupted his Nature, and made himself a Slave to vile Affections, can never by the mere Powers of Nature Redeem himself from Death, recover the Uprightness and Integrity of Nature, merit the Forgiveness of his Sins, and Purchase a new Right to immortal Life, and therefore cannot be Saved by Natural Religion, or the Natural Covenant.

good God in all pitiable Cases is inclined to shew mercy to Sinners, as a kind Father is to have compassion on a Prodigal; but if he does, it is by a new Covenant, and new Promises, founded in the right of Redemption, and qualified by what Terms and Conditions he pleases; which we cannot learn from Nature, nor know any more of, than what God thinks fit to reveal. This may satisfy us, how little reason there is to talk of Natural Religion to Sinners, who have Forfeited all the Rights of Nature, and must owe their Recovery and Salvation to the Merits of a Redeemer, and the free Grace and Goodness of God; and the knowledge and assurance of this, to the Promulgation of a new Covenant, and the institution of such a Religion, as prescribes the means of our Recovery, and the gracious terms and conditions of Pardon and Immortal Life. For though God be infinitely good, and we know that Forgiving Goodness is a Branch of Infinite Goodness, yet without an express Covenant and Promise we cannot tell whether he will Forgive us, or upon what Terms or for what Reasons he will Forgive; for though the Scripture were wholly silent in this matter, we have no reason to believe, that a good God will Forgive all, or will Forgive always;

no more than that a good man will do so: This mis-led *Origen*, that he ventured to reason about Gods Forgiving-Goodness, beyond any Covenant or Promise; which betrayed him into that Opinion, so directly contrary to the Christian Faith, that both Devils and Damned Men should be finally Saved, or at least admitted to a New State of Tryal. And yet I confess I know no Arguments, without a Promise and Covenant to prove that God will Forgive Sinners, which will not extend to the final Forgiveness of the Damned, whether Men or Devils, upon the supposition of their Repentance; and yet it is the hardest thing in the World to imagine, that either Men or Devils, who suffer the Vengeance of God, should harden themselves against Repentance, had they any hopes, that Repentance would Save them. And if we can Reason no farther from the Natural Notions of God's Goodness, than the Covenant under which we are, extends, there is an end of Natural Religion, as to the Salvation of Sinners; for the state of Nature is a Covenant of Works, not of Grace.

This I hope may satisfie you that Natural Religion, or the Natural Covenant, can give no security to Sinners, that God will hear and answer their Prayers: We must owe this to a

New Covenant of Grace; and we know of no other, but the Gospel-Covenant, of which Christ is the only Mediator; and we are as sure that God will hear all those Prayers which we offer up in the Name, and Merits, and Mediation of Christ, as we are of the Truth of the Gospel. For our Saviour hath not only expressly promised this, but the whole Nature and Administration of the Gospel-Covenant proves it. If Christ have made Atonement and Expiation for our Sins; if we are Justified through Faith in his Blood; if he be Ascended up into Heaven, as our Great High Priest, and Sits at the Right Hand of God, Powerfully to Intercede for us; as we must ask all in Christ's Name, so we shall as certainly be heard and answered, as he Sits at the Right Hand of God.

Indeed under the Law, all those Rites which gave Vertue and Efficacy to their Prayers, were Types of Christ; and signified and prefigured our acceptance in him. Sacrifice from the beginning was a Rite of Prayer, and this was a Type of the great Sacrifice of the Cross, which was prefigured by all the various Sacrifices of the Law. The Priests, who offered these Sacrifices, and made the Atonement, especially the High-Priest, who entred once a Year into the

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the Holy of Holies, were Types of our great High-Priest, who entered into Heaven, the true Holy Place, with his own Blood, there to offer up the Incense of our Prayers, and to make Intercession for us, as the Levitical Priests did in the Earthly Tabernacle. There was but one Temple, which was God's House, where he dwelt, and whither they were to bring all their Sacrifices, and to direct all their Prayers; and this was a Type of Christ, in whom the Godhead dwells Bodily, who answers to all the mystical parts of the Temple is our Propitiatory and Mercy-Seat, where we must offer up all our Prayers to God. So that we have as great assurance, that God will hear and answer all those Prayers which we offer to him in the Name of Christ, as we have of the Truth both of the *Jewish* and Christian Religion. And those who do not like this, must trust to their Natural Reason, and Natural Religion, which can give them no assurance at all, that God will hear them.

To conclude; Let us look after our Lord to Heaven, and see the Glory and Power of which he is advanced, how he sits at the Right Hand of God, swaying the Scepter of Heaven and Earth, and then doubt if we can, whether God will grant us what we ask in his Name.

Name. This is the Christian Triumph on Earth, That we have such a powerful Intercessor in Heaven; the Completion of our Happiness will be, when we shall have no further need of Praying, but shall be received into his Presence, to be where he is, and to behold his Glory.

Which God of his Infinite Mercy grant, through our Lord Jesus Christ; To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for ever. Amen.



F I N I S.

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